

**UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS
FACULTY OF SCIENCES
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF
EARTH SCIENCES**



**THE IRON CURTAIN
AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOPRON-EISENSTADT BORDER
REGION**

PhD thesis

Szabolcs Locsmándi

Supervisor:
Dr. József Tóth Dsc
rector emeritus university teacher

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Doctoral School:
Leader: University of Pécs Doctoral School of Earth Sciences
Prof Dr József Tóth, university teacher, rector emeritus,
doctor of earth sciences
University of Pécs, Faculty of Sciences, Institute of Geography,
Department of Human Geography and Urban Studies

Doctoral Topic Group:
Leader: Regional and settlement development
Prof .Dr József Tóth, university teacher, rector emeritus,
doctor of earth sciences
University of Pécs, Faculty of Sciences, Institute of Geography,
Department of Human Geography and Urban Studies

Discipline of the study: settlement geography

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. József Tóth, university teacher, rector emeritus,
doctor of earth sciences
University of Pécs, Faculty of Sciences, Institute of Geography,
Department of Human Geography and Urban Studies

1. CHOICE OF SUBJECT AND A DESCRIPTION OF THE REGION

1.1. Choice of subject

Nowadays and recently the research on border regions has aroused plenty of interest in the study of geography too.

During the recent two decades there have been changes in the circumstances of nature, economy, infrastructure, society, science and politics, which could not have been prognostised before.

The role of geographical science in research and analysis of processes mentioned above has become more valuable, especially concerning historic, regional and human geography further in the analysis of processes in the regional structures.

The researching on border regions draws even more interest. The western border regions of Hungary have a special position, because their cross-border relationships had been created by the treaty of Trianon, had been narrowed between WW2 and 1998 by the strictness of the iron curtain and revitalised by the Schengen regulations.

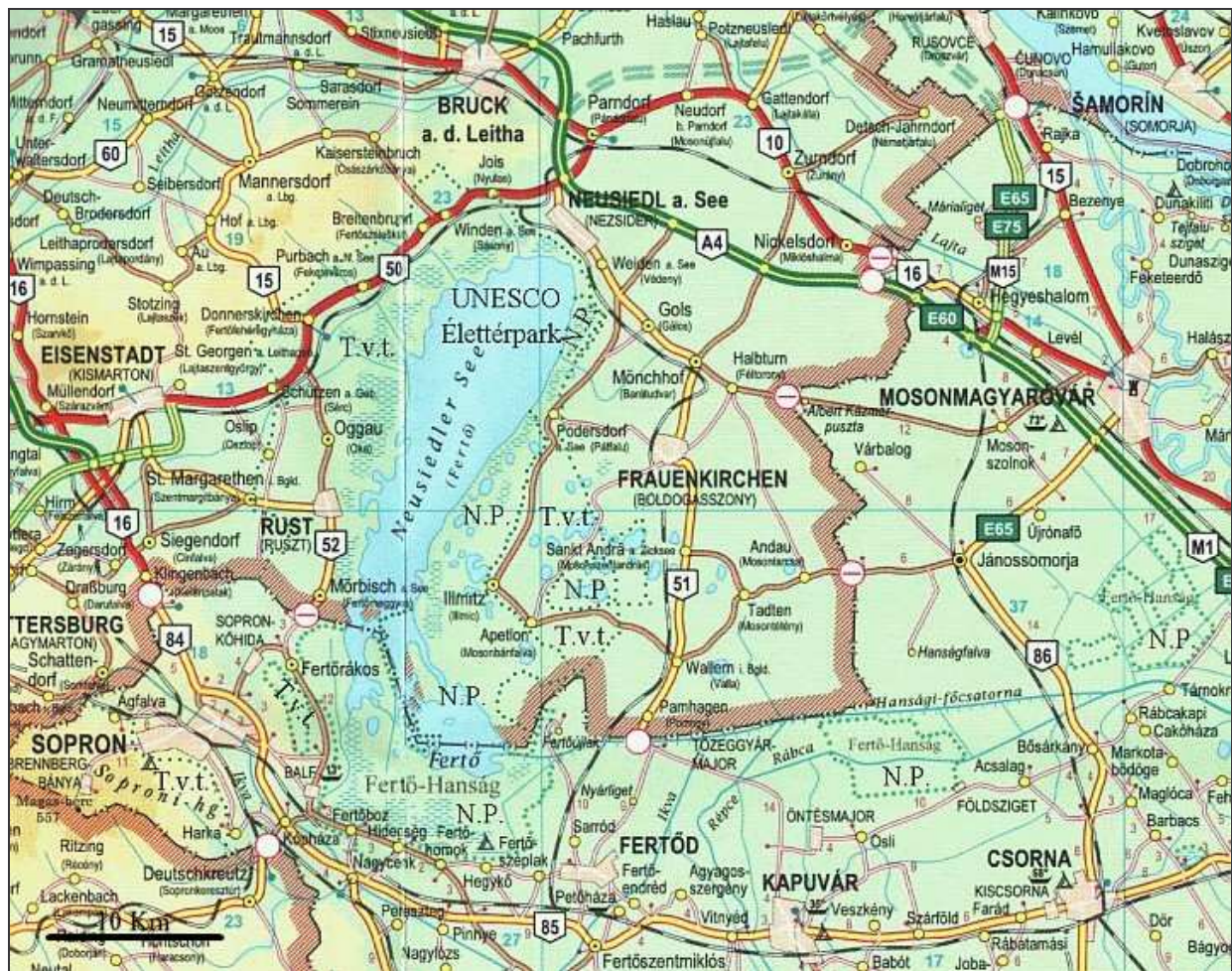
1.2. Location of the studied region:

The micro-region of research is a part of the Euregio West-Pannonia, which was established in 1999. Following the EU-accession of Austria in 1995 and Hungary in 2004 this region is now part of the EU. The total territory of the Euregio is 15 294 km² (source from 2006). About three quarters of the territory (11.328 km²) belong to Hungary and one quarter (4.208 km²) to Austria. The length of the common border is 356 km, which meets all districts of Burgenland and the counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron (178 km) and Vas (178 km).

The area involved in research is located in the Western-Pannonian region of the Republic of Hungary in the county of Győr-Moson-Sopron and in the Sopron-Fertőd statistical administrative district on the Western edge of the state. The Austrian area is located in the land of Burgenland of the Republic of Austria, at the Eastern border and in the Eastern territories of the districts of, Eisenstadt and Neusiedl am See. Before 1921 these territories formed the county of Sopron.

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Fig. 2: The location of the research area in Western Pannonia and Northern Burgenland



Source: STIEFEL LTD. 2001

With describing the regional processes this study analyses the area of Sopron and Eisenstadt and apart from the highlighted settlements it concerns the settlements of Ágfalva, Balf, Fertőboz, Fertőd, Fertőhomok, Fertőrákos, Fertőszéplak, Hegykő, Hidegség, Sarród (Hungarian side) and Apetlon, Illmitz, Klingebach, Mörbisch, Pamhagen, Rust és Wallern am See (Austrian Side). The empirical research involves the responders of the urban settlements Sopron and Eisenstadt and the rural settlements Sarród (which administrative includes Fertőújlak and Nyárliget) and Pamhagen. The position of the individual settlements can only be defined within their complexity, so it is indispensable to analyse the meso- and regional level as well.

2. AIM, HYPOTHESE, RESEARCH METHODS AND STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

2.1. Aim of research:

The aim of the research is to analyse the dominant processes of the regional interchanges of Sopron and Eisenstadt including the role of the settlement Sopron as a regional centre. These changes have to be analysed in the frame of the historical interchange of the border concerning role and function. It gives introspection into the shaping of micro-level regional relationships of people, who experienced the art of living among the border thereby it crayons out the phenomena, which occurred in the period of the forming of an integrated border-region.

The research also has to do with the regional appearance of border-position, and analyses the role of the border in forming the relation systems.

Within the micro-level relationships the empirical research makes an attempt to reveal the phenomena of three main areas (employment, tourism, and education) analysed in both urban and rural settlements.

2.2. The hypothesis of the research

The region and agglomeration of Sopron and Eisenstadt used to be coherent and nowadays there is a chance to re-connect and even to develop together. The landscape, which used to form a geographic, historic and cultural entity, is seeing its revival with multilevel relationships and dual centres.

As a consequence of the current changes in the role and function of the border, the settlements close to the border-crossings possess an enhanced migration potential. The cross-border relationships of the inhabitants are widening both horizontally and vertically, and show different and identical features concerning urban and rural regions.

The research is looking for the answer to the questions below, and it is integrating the historic overview and analysing the interpersonal relationships of the inhabitants on micro-level:

- Wherein do the changes of cross-border relationships affect the dynamics of the development?
- Which areas of the reforming relationships were attended by success, and which ones generated fallbacks and conflicts?
- What kind of advantages, opportunities, disadvantages and conflicts does cross-borderness create to the inhabitants?
- How do these phenomena affect the current process of reforming the roles and functions of the borders?

In connection with the hypothesis the research analyses, how the region of Sopron-Eisenstadt forms/formed the system of its micro-relationships in the developing period of a border with a short history and possessing a former historical and cultural entity.

During the research the following methods can be seen as novel:

- illustrative methods
- the separated (urban-rural) analysis of the relationships in the empirical research
- the empirical and qualitative analysis of Hungarian children attending the Austrian educational system

The study describes the changes of the status of Sopron as the traditional regional centre and the characteristics of the development of Eisenstadt after the treaty of Trianon.

As far as interpersonal systems concerned, the study gives a more detailed overview in the areas of manpower, tourism and education, which have been considered at the most dynamically developing areas of relationships. In connection with that it analyses the changing permeability of the borders, the factors of manpower-flow, the effects of the landscape on tourism, the typical forms of tourism in the region, its effect on the economy and the changes of micro-level educational relationships.

The region as the object of the micro-level research is to be concerned as unique: the phases of development in the geographically solid region are modelling the forms of position, function and effect of the border-region. These processes can be followed from unity through limited connections and the following complete isolation to the reviving relationships of our time.

This special status describes the development of several parts of a former solid region as a „unique laboratory experiment”. The main changes of the process occurred both in the aspects of social and historical geography in a very short period, and generated pivotal changes in both the natural and economic, and both the infrastructure and social spheres as well.

2.3. Research methods of the study:

The research includes:

- a historical overview of the region,
- an analysis of the urban and rural regions of the Hungarian and Austrian areas using statistical data and documentation,
- a qualitative questionnaire-research supported by deep interviews and background-conversations exploring urban and rural micro-relationships.

During the research methods of data induction were used, such as statistical methods using primary and secondary sources. The questionnaires of the empirical research can be mentioned as a special method beyond direct monitoring and press-observation.

2.3.1. The features of the theoretical research

The historical overview involves the areas of the Sopron-Eisenstadt region, which used to be parts of Sopron and Moson counties until the treaty of Trianon was declared. These areas were torn away despite their geographically close position. The research processes the features of the analysed areas using primary and secondary sources. The historical and statistical databases (archives, Hungarian and international publications, Central Statistical Office, Statistik Austria, Eurostat, WKO, etc...) have been completed by the information from empirical research methods (questionnaires, deep interviews, background conversations). Another aim of describing the historical development is to characterise the concrete periods using statistical methods, cartograms and figures, which provides background information of the process, which led to an integrated border-region. The study describes the concrete periods with the use of visual and illustrative methods, which uses a flow matrix to model the different developing features of a concrete region.

2.3.2. The flow matrix diagram as an analysing, illustrating tool and method

In order to analyse different historic phases the research used a graphical method coming from the SWOT analysis.

Description:

The diagram has two main components: a co-ordinate system, which can be concerned as a constant element and it has changing elements (signs, figures) as well.

Constant element of the diagram:

The main element of the diagram is a co-ordinate system, in which the factors are placed by using a mathematical ordering-principle.

The designation of the vertical and horizontal axes of the co-ordinate system:

- Strengths (S) - Weaknesses (W)
- Opportunities (O) – Threats (T)

Each axis determines its covered area according to the mathematical logic of the co-ordinate system, in which the factors can be placed by the mathematical ordering-principle.

According to that, the strengths will definitely come to the positive range while the weaknesses to the negative range. According to the analogy, opportunities can be measured on the positive side of the horizontal axis, while weaknesses on its negative side.

Determining the position of the factors:

The factors can be placed into the diagram by using a 5-grade scale or an individual scale according to the consequences from the numerical data. When the object of the research is analysing the development of a region, the analyse of E. Dobosi (2003) can be used and applied as a sample. This study was executed using the year 1999, and determined the economic, infrastructural and regional developments by using multi-variable mathematical-statistical methods and including a cross-sectional model.

Applying the method:

The method can be used to visualise the developing components using figures and symbols. The components are sorted into four (or more) groups (nature, economy, infrastructure, social).

Advantages of the method:

Shows the factors and the position of concrete factors visually more separate when concerning an area or a settlement.

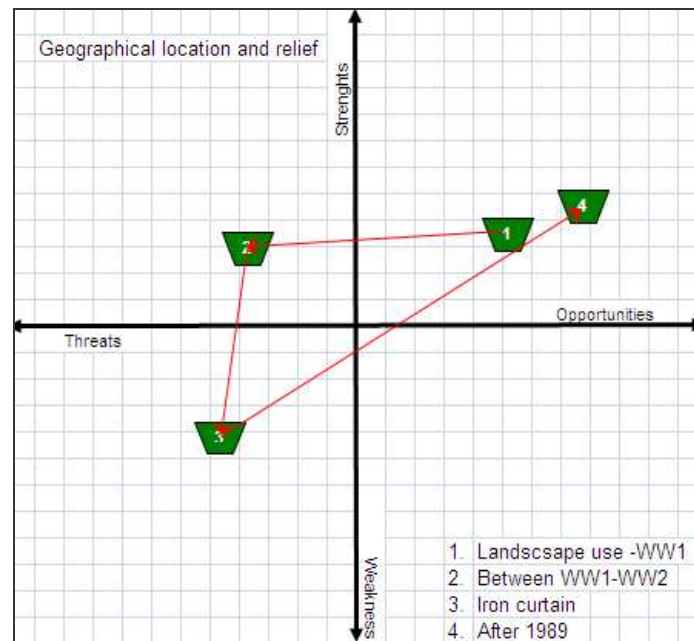
The diagram assists to view factors and ratios. Using the method flow-diagrams and functions can be constructed.

The method is eligible to visualise the factors of several areas, or one particular (e.g.: economy) area.

Disadvantages of the method:

Each categorisation and classification can be questionable, including the territorial classification of each factor. Exact designation and an appropriate justification can help solve this problem. The position and weight of each factor can be also questionable. In this case a positioning can be applied, which is supported through varieties characterised by mathematical and statistical methods.

Fig. 3: Flow-matrix diagram – sample



Source: author

2.3.3. Parameters of the empirical research

According to the original research conception, the empirical research of the cross-border relationships would have been analysed by questionnaires among Austrian and Hungarian enterprises. The enterprises to be asked were chosen from Hungarian and Austrian chamber databases, statistical indicators and company registries. 213 companies were contacted and after the result of 87 positive answers the questioning continued with personal conversations and questionnaires (41 Austrian and 46 Hungarian subjects – 47%-53%) in the environment of Sopron and Eisenstadt. The analysis was completed, but the filled questionnaires showed a different result from the statistical samples concerning branches and regions, so the generability and validity of the questionnaires became problematic. However the research has brought one consequence: with the EU-membership of Austria and Hungary there have been dynamic changes and rearrangements even on the micro-level of Austrian-Hungarian cross-border relationships. According to these factors the research has been complemented and it has been given a new hub: a qualitative analyse, which includes empirical questionnaires and interviews about micro-level relationships.

Focusing on the micro-level relationships the research chose target groups, whose entire members dispose some kind of 'living' cross-border relationship and their residence is relative close to the former iron curtain, which determines their role in the reconstruction of the Austrian-Hungarian traditional relationships. Earlier studies had the consequence that – as far as mobility and migration concerned – settlements located less then 20 kilometres from the border had a substantially better potential as settlements located further away.

According to the philosophy of this study the settlements with a more direct border-position accomplish more intensive and dominant forms of the current relationships, and they provide a special perspective on the vectors of future developments. Describing the changing role of Sopron it only analyses the regional level, and concerning relationships it includes two urban settlements (Sopron, Eisenstadt) and two rural ones with similar configurations.

Chart 1: Parameters of the empirical research

Characteristics of the analyse	Qualitative
Methods	Self-filled questionnaires Background-conversations at Austrian and Hungarian locations on the grounds of a standard scheme, Deep-interviewing
Characteristics of the questionnaire	Self-edited questionnaire involving open and closed questions, filled out unbidden and anonymously
Population	Inhabitants in the age of 18-62, living in the agglomeration of Sopron, Eisenstadt and partially Neusiedl am See
Target population	Inhabitants (18-62 years) of the urban region Sopron and Eisenstadt and inhabitants living not further as 20 kilometres from the border-crossing Fertőd-Pamhagen with intensive cross-border relationships (labour, tourism, education)
Preliminary survey, preliminary sampling	Questioning 213 enterprises, which participated in the Iron Curtain project and in the survey among enterprises. 87 positive answers, preliminary questionnaire survey of 687 people.
Locations of the preliminary sampling	Eisenstadt, Sopron Sarród, Fertőújlak, Nyárliget, parts of Fertőszéplak, Hegykő, Fertőhomok Pamhagen, partially: Apetlon, Illmitz, Wallern am See, Rust, Klängenbach, Mörbisch, Background conversations: Sopron, Eisenstadt Sarród, Pamhagen
Narrowed samples	Stratified sampling. From the subjects of the preliminary research (Iron Curtain Project) were chosen the people possessing active Hungarian-Austrian relationships and the intention of answering. The sample was completed with questioning teaching staff and students of Hungarian and Austrian institutes of education. Using the statistical and the 'snowball' method people with intensive cross-border relationships in education, labour and tourism were questioned.
Quantity of the narrowed sample	153 people, splitted urban-rural, male-female
Time of questioning the narrowed sample	November-December of 2007
Data processing	Statistical processing (Excel, graphics) and qualitative methods

Source: author

Temporality of the empirical research:

The research involving a historic overview analyses the features of the natural, economic, infrastructural and social sphere from the early Middle Age till the period that ended in 2007. The research process took more years, so there are several research units, which were completed before 2007 and can include data from former periods.

The author is not only a observer using statistical methods and indicators by the analyse of historical and scientific publications, but also a witness who has experienced the relationships of the borders – and the borders of the relationships in the mirror of his own walk of life and family relations.

3. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS

3.1. The effect of the border's changes in function and role on the central regional role of Sopron

The historical overview and the analysis of some components of the regional relationships showed a close connection between Sopron's location near the border and its settlement functions and central regional role. The changes appeared differently in the historic period and had a different impact on the natural, economic, infrastructural and social sphere of Sopron, which themselves are derivated and structuralised systems, involving branches with different levels and a complicated effect-interaction system put into the natural sphere (TÓTH J. 1981.).

In the evolution of Sopron the natural sphere had a dominating effect concerning roles and functions of the border, because the splitting of the former organic landscape had indicated developing directions and their level among settlements on both sides. The results about Sopron's changing role of agglomeration are presented by the research with 5 partial phases according to the historical periods. The figures of the phases were constructed following J. Tóth (1996). The main elements of the figures are following: The hierarchic and central regional position of Sopron and Eisenstadt, the projection of the cross-border domination in four (natural, economic, infrastructural, social) spheres, and the directions and intensity of the micro- and meso-level agglomerational relationships.

3.1.1. Sopron as a prosperous regional centre from the conquest of Pannonia to the treaty of Trianon

In consequence of its position in the European territory (amber-road, North-South, East-West directions) and the 'gate-function' between different lingual, economic and cultural territories, Sopron was predestined to become a junction centre. The widening of the settlement functions and activities generated a strong position in the regional hierarchy of settlements. As a result of the urbanisation in the economic, infrastructural, and social spheres, Sopron served as a prosperous regional centre and became a main player in the population's concentration. Compared with rural settlements the city obtained a higher-level residential and workplace function, which enabled a restructuralisation in labour, lifestyle, and demands of the urban inhabitants. As a regional effect of urbanisation there were changes of development in the villages and small settlements too, which were determined mainly by natural factors (e.g. fortunate location).

Among other settlements of the region Eisenstadt (Kismarton) got a much lower position in the hierarchy, which depended on the different level of components of the natural sphere. Even Rust as

a free royal town was far behind compared to the position of Sopron. The traditional trade routes determined by geographical circumstances allowed to establish and operate variable spatial relationships on the micro- and meso-level. The technical achievements had the result of developing these relationships horizontally and vertically. The lingual and cultural variegation of the region helped the receptivity for open-mindedness and modernisation.

3.1.2. Sopron as a border-town (1922-1945)

After WW1 the new borders eliminated city agglomerations and tore spatial relationships. The changes did not affect the main components of the geographical environment seriously: in the use of the landscape there were not as serious differences as in the following periods. However the fortunate geographical location lost its former importance. Sopron, the former most developed settlement of the region had lost much of its agglomeration, which resulted in changes in the economic, infrastructural and social spheres. The city and the region was forced to gear its monarchy-sized economic structure to a market of a much narrowed region, and to open towards the Eastern inland markets in order to use its oversized economic potential. The limitations of Western-oriented relationships were the most serious impacts in the economical sphere according to customs policy. Sopron's special function remained after the treaty of Trianon though. Despite large territorial losses conventions allowed the cooperation in some infrastructural and economic areas (mines in Brennbergbánya, using common water-bases, border-transit, customs-free transit routes etc.). These activities were regulated by special conditions of law.

Burgenland had to establish a new regional centre and to focus its orientation towards the Western territories.

The spatial role of Eisenstadt as a regional centre took a longer time to be formed: its functions in demography, economy, infrastructure and society had to be developed from the level of a small, agricultural town with no central functions to a level of a regional centre.

Although political changes decreased status and administrative position of Sopron, the state of development on the Hungarian side still exceeded the Austrian side.

The interpersonal relationships of the border-region remained open and active in the areas of culture, education etc. with marginal administrative restrictions.

The strengthening of citizenry determined Sopron in this period. The city hosted unique cultural and scientific achievements and world-wide recognised scientists and artists.

3.1.3. The effect of the iron curtain in the cold war period and during the following détente (1945-1989)

After WW2 the region was situated on the confine between the two political-ideological-economical worlds. The different directions of development in the two countries resulted in a new restructuralisation and in an even stronger isolation.

According to the prophecy of Winston Churchill, the borderline became an 'iron curtain' and blocked the development of macro-, meso- and micro-level relationships. This barrier was situated between two completely different systems in the following decades.

With establishing a strict barrier control the border reached the highest level of its barrier function.

The physical possibilities of the relationships came down to the crossing of Sopron, while all formal and informal connections to the West were blocked by the barrier and frontier features of the border.

The 'dead border' resulted in minimising the economic connections and abolishing almost the entire personal and tourist movements between the inhabitants of the two countries. The conventions made after Trianon remained in force till 1945 until they were unilaterally denounced by Hungary.

The restrictions of cooperations changed the interstate relationships as well. Concerning natural, infrastructural and social sphere the former relationships were abolished or minimised. In the micro-level interpersonal relationships the border fulfilled further filtering functions according to the generated hostile-images. The flow of information was filtered on a higher level.

The Hungarian and Austrian region was mainly characterised by peripheral features in this period. The realisable direction of spatial relationships on Hungarian side was the Eastern orientation and a closer connection to other Hungarian areas. The iron curtain completely demolished the region's role as an East-West by-pass. Sopron's single-polar regional and economic function changed and shrunk again. The city had to reform its economic structure again.

The regional role of Eisenstadt became moderately stronger although it still remained weak on regional level. The orientation of spatial relations was only possible towards Western-Europe, Vienna and the other provinces.

The province of Burgenland was behind the other Austrian provinces. In Hungary the Hungarian micro-region was still among the most developed regions of the country, though it was determined by the socialistic economic system.

The détente and the revival of the economic, trading, touristical border traffic put a new life into the region of Sopron-Eisenstadt.

The long-lasting détente in the art of 'living peacefully next to each other' from 1964 resulted in the normalisation of interstate relations too. In this period about 40 bilateral conveniences helped to reform the official relationships, and establish a new frame of law to border-crossing, border-traffic, economic, cultural, educational, social and infrastructural cooperations reforming official relations on macro- and meso-level. Thanks to the regulations, which made the flare of travelling in both directions possible, the Western-European travelling presence and transit-traffic was increasing with its second most important crossing of Sopron after Hegyeshalom. The weakening barrier and frontier functions of the border appeared less in border-security, but it was indicable in the relationships. The personal and heavy traffic, the cultural, formal, interpersonal social relationships were increasing by rapid leaps from the seventies and eighties, which valorised Sopron's function both on regional and national level.

Shopping tourism brought very intensive economic results for both regions.

Sopron's economy got a new course both in qualitative and quantitative aspects, with a growing sector of services and a trading system based on shopping and transit tourism.

Compared to the former period Sopron's junction position became stronger according to its function in the East-West relationships. This happened more intensive in the Hungarian agglomeration, but as a new feature on the other side of the border too. Sopron was affected stronger by the widening relation-systems than Eisenstadt, which was developing slower but more stabile.

3.1.4. Sopron after the change of system – accelerating or falling back?(1989-)

The history of cross-border relationships after the change of system can be divided into several phases. In the classification of J. Rechnitzer the period between 1989 and 2004 is called the era of developing relation systems, which is followed by the era of joining the European Union as a period of developing an integrating border-region (Rechnitzer 2007). Joining Schengen area a new period has begun with possibilities of new dimensions in relationships.

The system of macro-relationships widened with intensive international relationships beside the bilateral ones.

Increasing the amount of border crossings and border checkpoints, the spatial relationships of the natural region were reconstructed as well. According to the Schengen process the administrative and physical blockades of relationships are more and more disappearing. The barrier function of the border is losing its dominance and transforming into a new cue.

There are more modulated differences concerning the changing relation systems of both sides. Relationships in connection with the natural sphere involve relative less elements of tension. There are several critical points on meso level though (e.g. Austrian pollution of the river Raab), but the forms of cooperation in the research area are primary intending to save the environment and nature phenomena and they are based on an equal partnership.

Relations concerning geographical effects are similar to the cross-border relationships after the treaty of Trianon (saving and using common water-bases, conventions about saving the environment, international projects, nature parks etc.).

Following Austria's joining to the European Union the modern and intensive economic development strengthened the qualitative and quantitative differences between both regions even in the period of joining the EU by Hungary. In the economic relationships an advantage of the Austrian partners is to be prognostized.

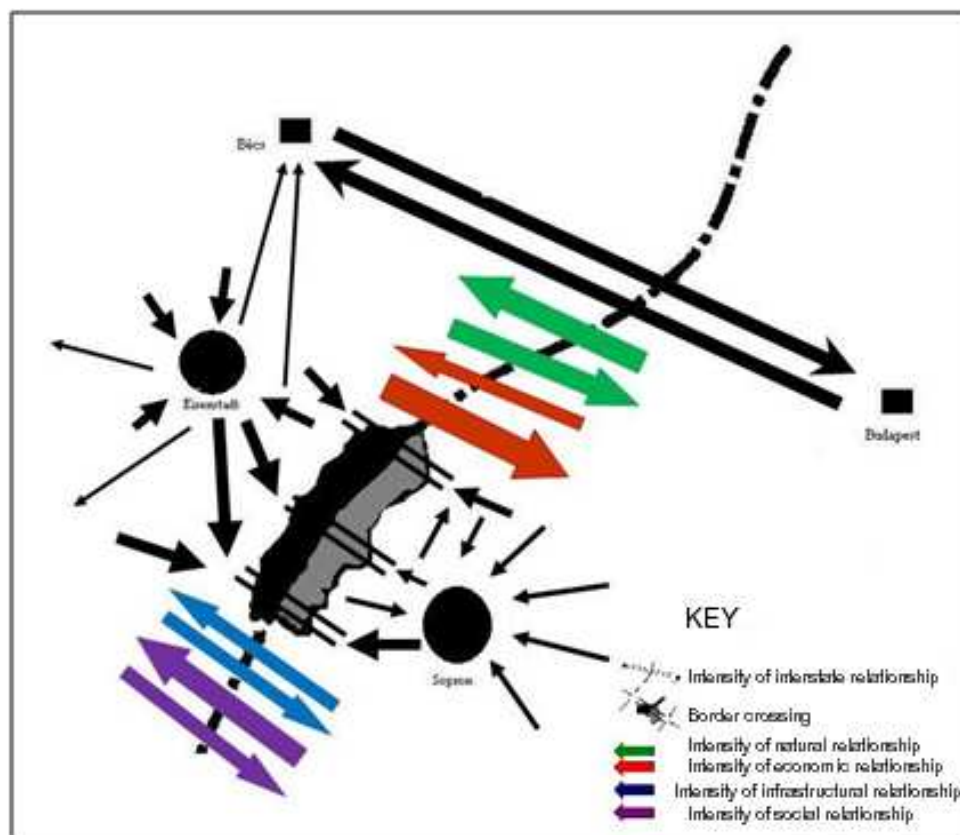
The importance of Sopron's position as a border-town decreased with the weakening restrictive functions of the border. This state became even harder with the changes in the economic system. The disappearance and crisis of the town's traditional industrial branches (generated by the transformations in the economic system) is resulting in transforming the economic features of the region concerning qualitative and quantitative indicators. The town's position in settlement hierarchy and its function in the regional area are being modified again. Processes influencing the key-areas (economy, labour, tourism) of cross-border relationships generate a serious loss of position in several partial areas. This phenomenon has an effect on Sopron's role as a spatial organiser in Hungarian and cross-border regions. This fallback has even increased after joining Schengen. New other Austrian possibilities appeared in the supplies e.g. founding private enterprises in the other country, access to cheaper rents of offices and industrial facilities and services with the opened and restriction-free border. However there are still functions, which can not be transported into the other country such as the Lőverek area and the University of Sopron, which ensure the position of Sopron.

After joining the EU the function of Eisenstadt lived important changes. Sharing in the EU-sources (Ziel 1 region) established the new economic role of Eisenstadt. Areas of information technology, telecommunication, K+F technology and quartier investments shared significantly in the expansions.

The development of the quartier sector is typical for the Austrian region, while the Hungarian region has not enough sources, economic environment and markets to become a serious competitor at the moment.

These factors and the overweight of the tertier sector in Hungary generate certain lability in the economy with an effect on the regional role of Sopron. The participants of the economy became more vulnerable to the changes of tourism, currency exchange courses and other external factors.

Fig. 4: New dimensions of expansion – relation systems after the change of system, from 1989 to the present



Source: author

While the settlement function of Eisenstadt in establishing and keeping workplaces was widening towards the future expansion, in the case of Sopron this was less successful. Parts of the expansion such as industrial parks and scientific centres at the university have appeared as new factors. However the weakening of the employing position and the qualitative and quantitative restructualisation of traditional trading branches is more typical. On the one hand more and more cross-border investments are accomplished (traffic network, bike-routes), and there are more possibilities to solve common challenges (fire-brigades, cooperations in emergencies and catastrophes). On the other hand restrictions can be found as well, such as the Austrian limitation of border-traffic with the allowance of bikers and pedestrians only.

Concerning social relationships NGOs are becoming more and more important with a Hungarian dominance.

After joining the European Union the positive effect of the factors coming from the natural capabilities showed up in new dimensions. As permanently benefiting factors the region's flora and fauna (natural parks), climate and fortunate geographical location can be mentioned.

In the common European territory the advantage of the geographical location can become more valuable and usable. The activities of the border-crossing nature parks help to save the treasures of the environment. Ecotourism will be able to be integrated into the touristic potential of the region. Using fortunate climatic circumstances can be realised by the development of the Lake Fertő (Neusiedler See). In wine and grape industry quality products and appropriate marketing can ensure new positions.

The current processes project a bipolar regional expansion characterised by cities with different functions. Eisenstadt evolved from a small town to spatial centre with high cultural, economic and scientific content while Sopron has to find its new role again.

3.2. The use of analysing diagram-systems and methods to visualise the natural, economic, infrastructural and social factors of Sopron and the research area

The description of the method appeared firstly in the historical overview, secondly in the chapter of results as a summarising process-matrix.

The study highlighted the factors, which can be considered as dominant factors of the development. These were analysed in every time interval by graphical methods as well.

This method made the description of the different factors visual and more explanatory. Using a network-like process-analyse changes can be followed easily and it is less difficult to get the appropriate consequences. Positioning the factors needs much circumspection, and indicating many factors is only possible in an appropriate-sized co-ordinate-system. The success of the study depended mainly on the analysing diagrams. According to the author's intention they can become effective tools of workshops and discussions.

3.3. Summary of the phenomena appearing in the horizontal and vertical development of current cross-border relations

3.3.1. Observations of the measuring:

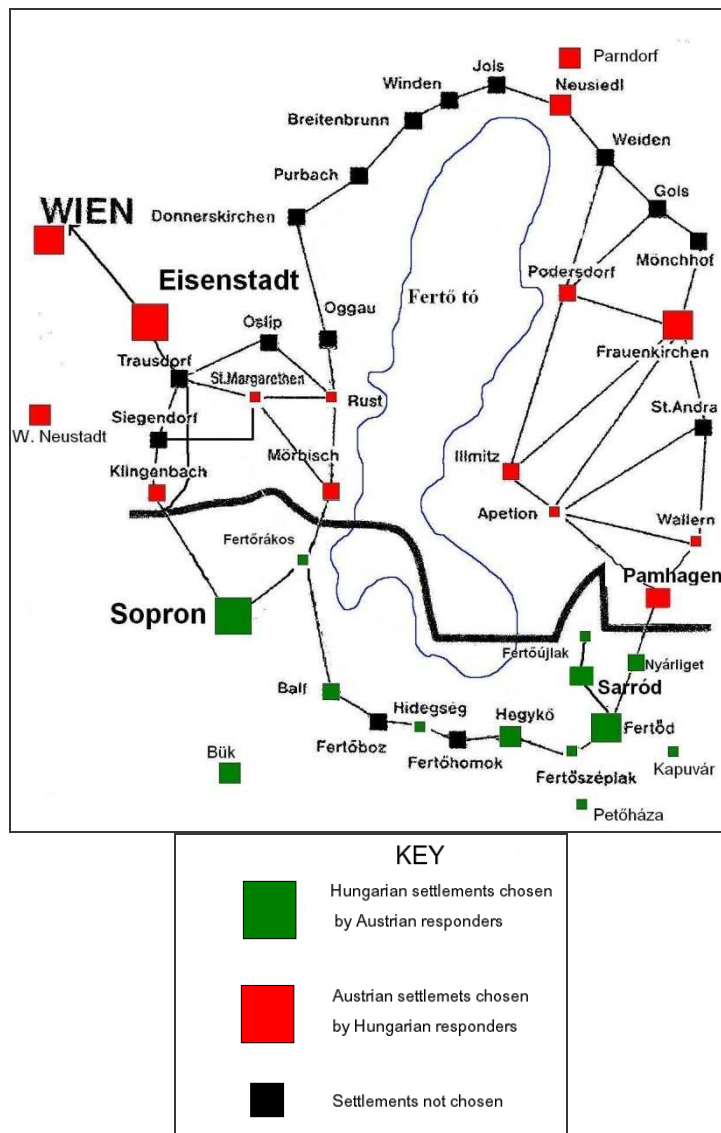
Concerning both Hungarian small settlements and urban region the decreasing of push-factors and the increasing of pull-factors (passport-regulations, EU, Schengen) made the construction of micro-relation systems more intensive among settlements in the contact zone.

A consequence from the observed Hungarian region is, that connection profiles of rural areas are wider and more intensive towards smaller Austrian settlements as of urban responders.

The data from the empirical research definitely verifies the integration of the town of Frauenkirchen in the daily spatial use of Hungarian responders. It is possible, that Frauenkirchen will be able to become a partial cross-border regional centre, which can lead to disadvantages in the regional Functions of the Hungarian town Fertőd.

The increasing amount of Hungarian employees in Austria has an effect on even more factors of the factors of functionality of smaller settlements. Parallel to the loss of employing functions touristic, leisure and recreational functions are moving to Austria too. The increasing participation of Austrian settlements in weekly and daily shopping can weaken the supplying function of Hungarian settlements. Some parts of the health insurance and services by Hungarian employees in Austria are connected to Austrian locations too. The early appearance of Hungarian children in the Austrian educational system has an effect on the educational functions of Hungarian settlements. There are effects concerning the residential functions of smaller settlements as well.

Fig. 5: Mostly chosen settlements



Source: author

Among Hungarian responders the shifting to Austria can be observed in following areas:

- daily services, shopping
- recreation
- health care,
- social benefits,
- education

The unilateral intensity may indicate that the decrease of the settlement functions should not only be considered as a positive consequence of the establishment of an integrated border-region, but as a phenomenon as well, which widens the existing differences between the levels of development. These differences can dominantly indicate themselves.

At the Austrian labour market the possibilities of being employed are changing. Nowadays Hungarian labour force is needed in four sectors:

- agriculture,
- branches related to tourism (mainly seasonally or occasionally),

- health care and nursing,
- among high-qualified university graduates

The employment of these labour groups in Austria can cause unfavourable phenomena in the Hungarian labour market (lack of experts, migration).

3.3.2. The horizontally and vertically widening micro-relationships in Hungarian-Austrian relations

According to the research age-determined forms of cross-border relationships realise themselves differently among Hungarian and Austrian people.

6.ábra: Typical relationships appearing in age periods among Hungarian and Austrian responders.

Relation type														
Services														
Business														
Culture														
Holiday														
Shopping														
Employment														
Education														
Health care														
Age (years)	0-3		3-6		6-14		14-18		18-25		25-55		55-62	
Summary of relations	1	0	3	1	4	2	5	4	7	6	6	7	6	7
	KEY													
	Typical Hungarian relationship in the correct age													
	Typical Austrian relationship in the correct age													
	Non-typical Austrian relationship in the correct age													

Source: author

Children (aged 0-3 years) of the legal employed Hungarians have the possibility to use the Austrian institutions and services of health care. The life period between 3 and 6 years allows them to use Austrian kindergartens and occasionally holiday and leisure activities, which is less typical among members of the Austrian group. Culture becomes a new factor for Hungarian children in the age of 6-14 with Austrian education and cultural events along the border. From Austrian side the demand for cultural, recreational and holiday trips is potentially larger.

In the age of 14-18 the quantity of the relation types is more equalised, with shopping as a new factor. The financial potential of younger generations is provided by their parents, so shopping did not appear in the former categories. The Austrian use of Hungarian educational institutes is not typical. Employment and business contacts in Austria can characterise the Hungarians in the age of 18-25, which is not typical for Austrians, who rather use services in Hungary. The relation systems of older generations are more equalised, but there are differences in the labour factor. Only a few Austrians are working in Hungary, and most of them are executives. However much more Austrians use health care (services, institutes) in Hungary in these age periods. The possibilities of

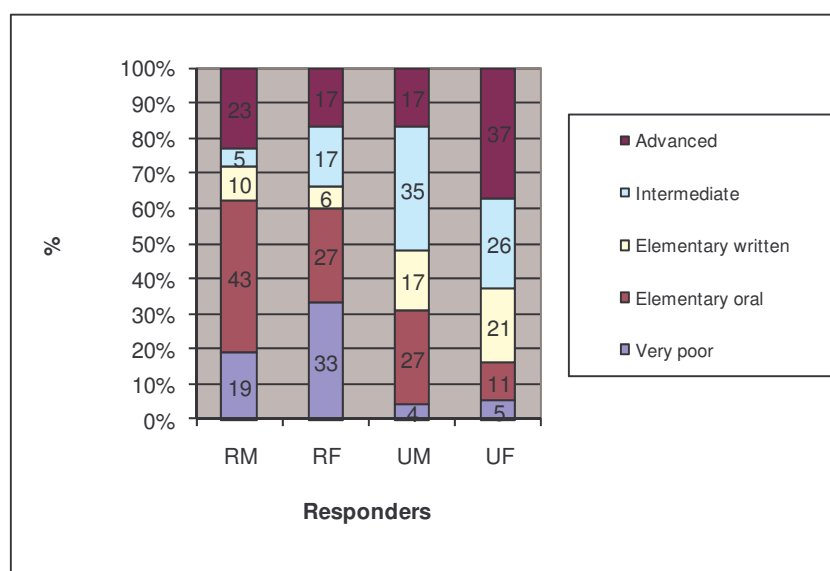
relationships realise themselves with different intensity and dominance according to Hungarian and Austrian responders, however it appears in a variable verticum in each period.

3.3.3. Connections between forms of cross-border micro-level relationships and the levels of lingual communication

Every micro-relationship between the border regions needs communication in a foreign language. The research discovered connections in more areas between language skills and the qualitative and quantitative factors of the relationships.

Studies observing former eras of the region described the lack of language skills as a critical point. The results of the empirical research did not recognise a significant change despite of the typically multi-component relationships of the responders, which relationships involve areas demanding variable language skills and per capita they are represented high both in rural and urban samples.

Fig. 7: Language skills of Hungarian responders



Source: author

Among rural male and female responders language skills are mainly limited to the minimum, even among people with Austrian employment and who need foreign language communication on a daily level. It is quite paradox, that despite the high rate of labour and other connections a higher language skill did not appear.

It is a unique phenomenon that rural employers were able to appear in the Austrian labour market, despite their lower language skills. The reason can be found in the competition and salary demands among employees. Minimal language skills enable the employment of low-qualified employees, but it does not allow to establish further interpersonal relationships.

A connection can be recognised between the distribution of urban responders in the branches of employment and their better language skills. The scope of activities requires higher language skills. Different relationships (relatives, friends, business, labour, tourism, education) attract different prevalence in the potential use of the language and language skills. Relationships towards Austria connect different areas, but it can be indicated that the rate of interpersonal relationships with a demand for higher language skills is lower among people, who master the language on a lower level. In the directions of employees with lower language skills the relatively high number of

business relations hides another paradox, because the lack of language skills is normally a great disadvantage in business. It seems to be advancement in a way that the contents of minimal language skills became more oriented, and according to the interests it can reach a higher language mastery compared to other areas.

The research discovered that 31% of Austrian responders could possess lower or higher skills of Hungarian language. The interest in possessing Hungarian skills increased definitely.

Compared to former research results (T. HARDI 2005, M. NÁRAI 1999) there was not a serious development in language skills even not on the level of the direct zone with more intensive and frequent relations. However development can be more intensive in long range according to the widening and development of interpersonal relationships in the border-zone.

3.3.4. Success areas and tensions in the relations of the border region

The complexity of the relations makes it difficult to label an area as successful or problematic.

According to the empirical research

Micro-level success areas are following:

- developing cultural relationships
- common labour-cooperations, forums

The following tensions could be indicated:

- Austrian limitations of border-traffic
- participation of Hungarians in benefits of Austrian social and health-care services
- migration of high-qualified Hungarian labour force
- similar tourist potential
- unilateral lingual communication
- competition in the tourism branch
- the lack of developed institutional cooperations
- different conditions in business relations

Anomalies can be found in the development of the relations. On the one hand there is a fortunate cooperation in some institutes (chambers, universities), while institutions with a developed infrastructure (tax office, treasury, Finanzamt) still miss an appropriate cooperation. These anomalies appear on the level of enterprises and personal relations, such as occasionally hostile initiatives (e.g. tourism).

4. CONNECTIONS BETWEEN RESEARCH RESULTS AND HYPOTHESES

The research verified that the border region is re-establishing its relationships intensively. However it can be appointed, that an equal partnership between Hungarian and Austrian regions still has disadvantages in many areas. The neighbouring regions possess different positions in the types of relations, which can be projected in the forms of micro-relations.

The research showed that labour-relations are at a disadvantage, which is caused by the poor development of the lingual area.

The horizontal and vertical widening of the possibilities of relations can be defined as an achievement.

On micro-level there are several phenomena, which require further research (e.g. migration, education).

About the integration of homogenate Western-European countries much experience and many research results are available, but in the Austrian-Hungarian region two systems with different economic and political past are integrating. The theoretical possibilities are overwritten by the problems of the practical execution.

The integration of the Sopron-Eisenstadt region can be supported and accelerated by the historical roots.

The processes of this region can include the expected elements of integrating other border regions.

The official interstate framework of integration is filled with contents by micro-, meso- and macro-level changes. The results of the scientific research on different levels can help the complex introduction of the integration-process, and indicate developing tendencies.

5. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

5.1. Publications related to the study:

1. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2004): *Vasfüggöny nélkül – új kilátások Európára*. Földrajzi Értesítő 2004. 3-4, pp. 331-336.
2. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2006): *Kékfrankos im Vormarsch*. Naturpark Frühling-Geschnatter, 1/2006. (Illmitz), p. 6.
3. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2008): *Fejezetek a vasfüggöny emlékkönyvéből II*. Valóság 2008/9, pp. 97-109.
4. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2008): *Freie Fahrt für die ROeEE*. Aus der Pforte 2008/9, (Schattendorf), pp. 19-33.
5. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2009): *Eine lücke im Eisernen Vorhang*. In: Trummer, K. (ed.): Geographische Jahrbuch Burgenland 2009, Vereinigung Burgenländischer Geographen, Neutal, pp. 240-251.
6. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2009): *A GYSEV fejlődése és szerepe a határmenti kapcsolatok alakulásában Sopronban és környékén*. Navigátor 2009/4, pp. 33-39.
7. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2009): *A lehullt vasfüggöny után*. Modern Geográfia, 2009/2 18p. http://www.moderngeografia.hu/tanulmanyok/munkaeropiac/locsmandi_szabolcs_2009_2.pdf
8. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2009): *A határon áthatoló vaspálya*. Tér és Társadalom, 2009/2 pp. 135-153.

5.2. Other publications and lectures related to the study:

1. MADARÁSZ T. – LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2002): *Evaluation of the test pages*. In: Wolfbauer J.(ed.) Iron Curtain Project Conference III. Praha, Montan Universität Leoben, Leoben, 2002 pp. 5-6.
2. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2003): *Economic structure of Kékfrankos area*. In: Madarász T. (ed.) Iron Curtain Project Conference IV. Sopron, Miskolci Egyetem, Miskolc, pp. 7-8.
3. MADARÁSZ T. – LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2003): *Analogy and diversity in the referencia areas*. In: Zeil P. (ed.) Iron Curtain Project Conference V. Salzburg, University of Salzburg, Salzburg 2003, pp. 9-10.
4. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2003): *The wine of Sopron*. In: Wolfbauer J.(ed.) Iron Curtain Project Conference VI. Illmitz, Montan Universität Leoben, Leoben, pp. 12-14.
5. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2003): *Strengths or weaknesses?* In: Wolfbauer J.(ed.) Iron Curtain Project Conference VII. Eisenstadt, Montan Universität Leoben, Leoben, pp. 6-7.
6. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (2003): *Without the Iron Curtain – New perspectives for Europe*. In: Kiss M. – Gulyás L. – Erdélyi E. (szerk.): Európai kihívások 2. Szegedi Tudományegyetem SZÉF, Szeged, pp. 166-170.

5.3. Publications not related to the study:

1. LOCSMÁNDI SZ. (1997): *Felnőttképzési formák Székesfehérvárott*. In: Wries R. (szerk.): A felnőttképzés helyzete Magyarországon. Német Népfőiskolai Szövetség WBA, Budapest, pp. 113-124.